

A RIDE ON A CYCLONE

Miraculous Experience of a Unitarian Minister in the Monster's Grasp.

CARRIED A HALF MILE

Fell One Hundred and Fifty Feet, Was Badly Broken Up and Was Own Surgeon.

To ride a half mile through the air on a cyclone and live to tell the tale is a unique experience. Yet that is precisely what happened to Rev. A. N. Somers, Unitarian minister at Highland Springs, a suburb of Richmond, Va. I had the story from Mr. Somers himself. It ran as follows:

"I had read and heard much about cyclones, but my information was conflicting and far from satisfactory. Had resolved if I ever got near enough one to investigate for myself. Don't know that I ever prayed the good Father to send me my way, but was willing he should."

"My opportunity came in 1872. I had gone west to teach school, salaries then being more than double what they were in Virginia and forthcoming when due."

"It was in Randolph county, Indiana, in the month of September. The former with whom I boarded was building a barn and went out to assist the carpenter, it being Saturday afternoon and nothing doing."

"One of the workmen remarked that it was good cyclone weather, and just as we finished shingling one side of the roof, he shouted, 'Look out boys, there is a cyclone coming!'

"Glancing hastily in the direction he pointed, I saw on the horizon, some five or six miles distant, a monster as black as ink and as clear-cut as a pyramid, bowling along at terrific speed. Indians had many legends. In traveling back through the country, one sees trees in twisted and strenuous timber-trees three feet in diameter twisted off a few feet above ground, as if by giant hands."

"There was an old track to the west of us, and as we watched the cyclone advance, it was plainly evident that it was following the course of its predecessors."

"My ignorance and consequent lack of fear, and my desire to better observe this wonderful phenomenon, led me to disregard the advice of my associates to get out of the building."

"Meanwhile the funnel-shaped mass of dust and debris grew momentarily larger. Fascinated, I watched it, and listened spell-bound to the crash and grind of the debris in its swirl. Fences, fragments of buildings, cattle, grain, timber, hay stacks and, for sight I knew, human beings enveloped in a sable mantle of dust, pounding and grinding one another to pieces and sweeping along with lightning rapidity."

"My interest was roused to the highest pitch, when suddenly a chill ran through me. The racing demon, now almost opposite us, had suddenly cracked, and leaving the old track at right angles, was headed towards us."

"There was no time left to get down and I was too far from the ground to drop. So burying my hatchet in the shingles in such a way as to get a hold on one of the rafters underneath, I stretched myself flat on the roof and awaited the shock."

"I was none too quick. For immediately the roof rose on the rim of the cyclone and sped majestically on its way in a spiral course till it reached the top of the swirl—150 feet from the ground, according to the estimates of the onlookers."

"The roof remained intact until it had reached its greatest altitude, and had traveled on the rim of the cyclone proper nearly half a mile, when the corner opposite the one I was holding gave way into the inside curve of the swirl, and the roof, with a great crash, went to pieces."

"I lost my support and was left in mid-air, the victim of the most terrible power I had ever encountered."

"During all this time, and it was probably only the fraction of a minute, though it seemed an age, I was fully conscious of my position, and was calcu-



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lating on how it would terminate. The roar was deafening, and I realized that if I was drawn into the swirl I would be ground to pieces like the grit in a mill. I also speculated that if I dropped to the ground I should be asphyxiated before reaching terra firma.

"To my surprise I did neither, but kept drifting around what seemed a circle of a hundred yards in diameter, until I settled down to about 75 feet from the ground.

"Then I recognized that I had been

drifted into a hole in the mud and gravel of the creek. The cyclone had swept the water before it in its passage a moment earlier.

"Pulling myself together, I took an inventory of my injuries. Both legs were broken in two places between the ankle and knee and my feet were horribly mangled. There were eighteen fractures at least."

"Describing myself to the bank I cut the boot from my feet with a pocket knife, and was making a compress to stop the flow of blood—using pieces torn from my shirt—when friends came up.

"One of the men attempted to remove the other boot, but was so excited he cut my foot as much as the boot. There was no surgeon near and I was beginning to feel the loss of blood. So I took the knife and finished the job myself, and also set my own broken bones, the carpenters mending the splints, having had some little experience along this line."

"Strangely enough, I had no pain for a week, the result of that time I suffered gently. During my ride on the cyclone and for hours after, I seemed to be under the influence of an electric shock, which probably paralyzed the nerves of feeling. For the same reason I was unable to let go the hatchet until I reached the ground, though I tried from the moment the roof went to pieces."

"Looking back over my experience, it was a miracle I was not killed. The roof to which I clung rested mainly, I think, on the anti-cyclone, which is a mass of heavy cold air moving in an opposite direction from the warm light air of the cyclone proper. It was probably this fact which prevented me from being drawn into the vortex and crushed to bits."

"It was years before I recovered entirely from my injuries, and I have been in the track of several cyclones since, but was not frightened in the least."

"Still, I've been content with second-hand information since that first experience, and so far as cyclones are concerned, I shall never again attempt original observations."

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REV. A. N. SOMERS.

released from the hold of the cyclone and was shooting to earth like a rocket head first. I expected to be dashed to pieces, but suddenly the top of a tree swam before my vision, and as I plunged into it, I seized hold of a limb.

"The force of the fall was so great and my grasp so strong that the branch was torn from the tree and carried with me to the ground, a distance of thirty feet. My hold on the limb had reversed

itself, so that I was now suspended by my fingers from the branch, and I was hanging by my thumbs, with my feet pointing downwards.

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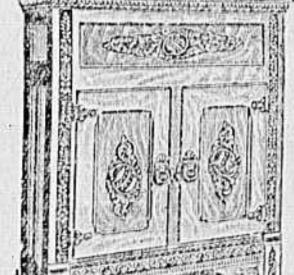
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NOT SO TRUE TO NATURE

Jack Yeats Says Paddy With Pipe and Pick Is a Myth.

CARICATURES OF THE IRISH

The Artist Has Sought in Vain for Him in Old Ireland.

Jack Yeats says that he has sought here vainly for the Irishman of our caricatures. He is not in Ireland. There, as here, nature refuses to look up to art. He has an upper lip extremely long, the upper lip of a gorilla. He smokes a clay pipe, the stem of which is too short. It is a flower in bloom at his teeth. But the long upper lip is an individual trait and not the trait of a race. And the Irish do not smoke clay pipes.

One does not see them carrying pick-axes on their shoulders. They do not dig the trenches or build the roads. The Italians do that; they are doing that in all the great lands, thus to continue the exercise of the mission of Rome that is to bring Rome to every forest, to every desert. Kromm, the chief of a tribe of Gauls who were Albatrosses and did not know that they were Albatrosses, was a brave warrior. He had defeated many other tribes because he knew the forest. The Romans did not know the forest, and he was sure that they could never come to him. But he woke up one morning when there was no forest. In front of him were the Roman legions that seemed to have taken Rome with them to his lair, so easy had been their road. The road is the mark of civilization. It is a great honor to make that mark. The Irish are not making it. They have other missions in which there is great honor, but not that one.

Jack Yeats draws Irishmen—real Irishmen, not those of the caricature. His figures are true. One may depend upon them. They have the native simplicity of the folk song tale, and Jack Yeats has worked for years and years to attain that native simplicity. It is natural, and an artist needs a great deal of art to be natural. He has lived among the Irish as if he had never seen a caricature of them.

It was extremely difficult. The persons and the things that one sees all the time one never sees at all. The effect is similar to that of holding one's hand close to one's eyes. One does not see it. Jack Yeats and his brother, W. B. Yeats, the poet, express Ireland perfectly in their pictures and in their poems, because they have the faculty of placing themselves at a certain distance from their subjects. Their drawings are too close, and they do not see them through caricatures and paintings.

Caricatures of the Irish are all wrong because they are not made upon the principle of artistic caricature that is to make portraits with characteristic traits exaggerated. The caricaturists of the Irish have confounded one another for years, and their master was a libelling enemy. They have violated the great law of modern art, the law that nature can be the only model to an artist. They have been more copyists and imitators, and so their work fails. It has richly deserved to fail.

Jack Yeats brought to Clausen's gallery his water colors of Ireland. The artists that appreciated them were those who had not been spoiled in their clearness of vision by the caricatures that have been conventional. These caricatures, false as they were, seemed to be truthful. Most persons saw the Irish through the caricatures that have been made of them. Many persons carried in their memory to Ireland the impression of these caricatures, and returned from Ireland with the sincere opinion that they were truthful.

Untruth is more powerful than truth, because untruth is multiple and has a suppleness which truth has not. It is vain to say that the Irishman that wears breeches, twirls a shillelah and dances Jigs is not in Ireland nor elsewhere.

—Henri René du Bois, in New York Journal.

STUDENT CONFERENCE.

Plans for This Meeting, to be Held at Waynesboro, N. C.

The Southern Student Conference of Young Men's Christian Associations will be held in Waynesboro, N. C., on June 10 to 13. This conference has been held annually since 1892 for the purpose of uniting the young men of the South in Christian work among Southern college and preparatory school students, and of training the student leaders of this work. The conference was held last year at Asheville School, and was attended by 266 delegates, representing 36 institutions in twelve States.

The program of the conference will consist of platform meetings, conferences on Young Men's Christian Association work, missionary institutes, normal, Bible and mission study classes and meetings where Christian callings are forcefully presented. The afternoons are given over to athletics and other forms of recreation. The conference will be entertained in the well-arranged Haywood White Spring Hotel, where all the meetings will be held.

Among the speakers who will address the conference are Professor O. E. Brown, of Vanderbilt University; Dr. Walter R. Lambuth, of Nashville; Dr. J. A. B. Scherer, of Charleston; Dr. A. L. Phillips, of Richmond; Prof. Edward L. Worth, of Oberlin College; Mr. F. S. Brockman, of China, and Messrs. John R. Mott and Robert E. Speer, of New York City.

Religious classes will be conducted in those colleges which have been most useful in the conference. Among the leaders of such classes will be Prof. W. M. Forrest and Dr. H. M. McElroy, Jr., of the University of Virginia; Dr. Brown, of Vanderbilt University; Professor W. C. Branham of Branham and Hughes School; Mr. F. Boyd Edwards, formerly traveling secretary of the Student Department of the International Committee, and Mr. A. J. Elliott, of Brooklyn.

The missionary features of the conference are in charge of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions. A number of representatives of foreign missionary societies and the various churches will also participate in the conference.

This will be a series of a conference held under the auspices of the Student Department of the International Committee. The other conferences of this character which will be held this summer are the Northeast Conference, at East Northfield, Mass., July 1 to 10; the Lake Erie Conference at Lakeside, Ohio, June 17 to 23; the Western Conference at Lake Geneva, Wis., June 17 to 23; and the Pacific Coast Conference at Gearhart Park, Ore., May 28 to June 5.

For information concerning any of these meetings write H. P. Anderson, Secretary, 3 West 29th Street, New York City.

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